

Overview of DCF's Interactions with the Vermont Justice System

Family Services Division:

- Child abuse/neglect proceedings
- Juvenile Justice proceedings
- Termination of Parental Rights' hearings
- Adoption proceedings

Commissioner's Office – Registry Review Unit:

- Determinations of Substantiation and Expungement from the Child Protection Registry may be appealed to the Human Services Board.
- Human Service Board decisions may be appealed to the Vermont Supreme Court.

Economic Services Division:

- Administrative Disqualifications for 3SquaresVT; these can be appealed to the superior court and may be referred for criminal prosecution.
- An applicant for or a recipient of assistance, benefits, or social services from the Department for Children and Families may file a request for a fair hearing with the Human Services Board if aggrieved by any agency action.
- Human Service Board decisions may be appealed to the Vermont Supreme Court.

Office of Child Support:

- OCS may be the single largest user of the Family Court involving about 7,000 court events per year, about 60% of all child support cases handled by the courts.
- Typical actions are to establish parentage and child support orders, modify support orders and, enforce orders.
- Most actions are in case manager conferences and magistrate hearings. By state and federal law qualified non attorney staff may appear at these hearings falling under 'expedited process' requirements.
 - About \$1 million per year is paid to the courts to pay for handling these cases.
- OCS has about 20,000 child support cases and collects and distributes about \$53,000,000 per year in child support collections.
 - By statute OCS is the child support registry for all child support orders issued in the state and is responsible for notifying employers and receiving child support payments in all cases where the court orders provide for child support wage withholding.

